



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/028,283	12/28/2001	Margo Northcutt	52493.000231	2975
21967	7590	01/04/2006		
HUNTON & WILLIAMS LLP INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY DEPARTMENT 1900 K STREET, N.W. SUITE 1200 WASHINGTON, DC 20006-1109			EXAMINER KRISCIUNAS, LINDA MARY	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3623	

DATE MAILED: 01/04/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/028,283	NORTHCUTT ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Linda Krisciunas	3623	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 28 December 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 28 December 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

2. Claims 1-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Gullotta (US 2002/0156904).

As per claim 1, Gullotta teaches a system for managing workflow requests for service comprising: a request for service input module for enabling one or more requesting members of the organization to input information for a request for service from the department by connecting to the system over a network (paragraph 35: "the platform system (10) may receive requests for services from user computers"); a database system for storing information regarding the requests for service input module (paragraph 17: "database"); a change of status input module for enabling a service provider participant from the department to update the status of a request by connecting to the system over a network (paragraph 37: "to audit the current and historical status of the system"); and a signoff module to enable a service provider participant and a requesting member to signoff a requested service, the participant and requesting member connecting to the system over a network (paragraph 41: "A

Art Unit: 3623

Customer Supervisor (20) may make changes to a roster of current users and approve requests made by users, where such requests require approval.”).

As per claim 2, Gullotta teaches the network comprises the internet (paragraph 49).

As per claim 3, Gullotta teaches the request for service module enables a user to change a pending request for service (paragraph 35: “The platform system 10 may also receive information from administrator computers relating to, for example, authorizations of users' requests or changes in users, policies or roles.”).

As per claim 5, Gullotta teaches a reporting module that enables users to request reports regarding requests for service stored in the database (paragraph 37: “An RPM provisioning system administrator may also generator may also generate reports to audit the current and historical status of the system, and may also be authorized to manage different portions of the system's data by being granted permission to access such data.”).

As per claim 6 and 20, Gullotta teaches the reporting module enables users to request a report that comprises activities of information technology personnel (paragraph 5: “Network environments often involve a variety of network users, where the users may be grouped or categorized by a relation or role that the user serves in the environment. For example, in an engineering or technical development company environment, users of the company's computer network may include company officers, directors, managers, engineers, technical support staff, office support staff, accounting department staff, information technology (IT) department staff” where the report RPM

Art Unit: 3623

system administrator can generate reports to audit the system, including the various users.).

As per claim 7 and 19, Gullotta teaches the reporting module enables the user to request a report based on various parameters of the request for service (paragraph 37: "An RPM provisioning system administrator may also generator may also generate reports to audit the current and historical status of the system, and may also be authorized to manage different portions of the system's data by being granted permission to access such data.").

As per claim 8 and 21, Gullotta teaches a time entry module that enables service provider department participants to enter time regarding requests for service being processed (paragraph 124: "In addition, a start date or other date and time information may be entered, and the RPM system can initiate provisioning tasks when triggered by this date and time information").

As per claim 9, Gullotta teaches a reporting module that enables a user to request a report regarding the time activities of one or more service provider department participants (paragraph 37: "An RPM provisioning system administrator may also generator may also generate reports to audit the current and historical status of the system, and may also be authorized to manage different portions of the system's data by being granted permission to access such data.").

As per claim 10, Gullotta teaches an electronic messaging module that generates a message regarding a request for service, the message including at least one link to the stored request for service (paragraph 17: ""Soft" resources may include e-mail and

voice mail accounts, application programs, databases, files, folders, the Internet, Web pages, organizational Intranets, messages to third parties, digital certificates for enabling the user to access encrypted resources, the capability to order products over the Internet, the ability to order a corporate credit card, access to financial services providers, and the like.”).

As per claim 11, Gullotta teaches the messaging module transmits a message regarding the receipt of a new request for service received by the request for service input module to a service provider department member (paragraph 98: “The Workflow Server component (212) includes modules for provisioning and de-provisioning services within the system. The Workflow Server component includes the policy engine, workflow engine, logging, email, authentication and authorization modules of the applications services module group (132), as well as the data services modules (136) and the provisioning and message transforming modules of the remote services module group (134).” And paragraph 35: “In the generalized examples of FIGS. 1 and 2, the platform system 10 may receive requests for services from user computers. The platform system 10 may also receive information from administrator computers relating to, for example, authorizations of users' requests or changes in users, policies or roles.” Where messaging is utilized by the system and there is contact concerning requests from users to the system that are relayed to the partner systems (30), see Figure 1.).

As per claim 12, Gullotta teaches the messaging module transmits a message regarding the receipt of a change to a request for service to the member that requested

the service (paragraph 98: "The Workflow Server component (212) includes modules for provisioning and de-provisioning services within the system. The Workflow Server component includes the policy engine, workflow engine, logging, email, authentication and authorization modules of the applications services module group (132), as well as the data services modules (136) and the provisioning and message transforming modules of the remote services module group (134)." And paragraph 35: "In the generalized examples of FIGS. 1 and 2, the platform system 10 may receive requests for services from user computers. The platform system 10 may also receive information from administrator computers relating to, for example, authorizations of users' requests or changes in users, policies or roles." Where messaging is utilized by the system and there is contact concerning requests from users to the system that are relayed to the partner systems (30), see Figure 1.).

As per claim 13, Gullotta teaches the messaging module transmits a message regarding availability of a service for user testing to the requestor of the service (paragraph 98: "The Workflow Server component (212) includes modules for provisioning and de-provisioning services within the system. The Workflow Server component includes the policy engine, workflow engine, logging, email, authentication and authorization modules of the applications services module group (132), as well as the data services modules (136) and the provisioning and message transforming modules of the remote services module group (134)." And paragraph 35: "In the generalized examples of FIGS. 1 and 2, the platform system 10 may receive requests for services from user computers. The platform system 10 may also receive information

from administrator computers relating to, for example, authorizations of users' requests or changes in users, policies or roles." Where messaging is utilized by the system and there is contact concerning requests from users to the system that are relayed to the partner systems (30), see Figure 1.).

As per claim 14 and 26, Gullotta teaches a messaging module transmits a message regarding the availability of a service for warranty review of a service to the requestor of the service (paragraph 98: "The Workflow Server component (212) includes modules for provisioning and de-provisioning services within the system. The Workflow Server component includes the policy engine, workflow engine, logging, email, authentication and authorization modules of the applications services module group (132), as well as the data services modules (136) and the provisioning and message transforming modules of the remote services module group (134).") And paragraph 35: "In the generalized examples of FIGS. 1 and 2, the platform system 10 may receive requests for services from user computers. The platform system 10 may also receive information from administrator computers relating to, for example, authorizations of users' requests or changes in users, policies or roles." Where messaging is utilized by the system and there is contact concerning requests from users to the system that are relayed to the partner systems (30), see Figure 1. Warranty review is not explicitly stated, but is implied by the statement "may receive requests for services from user computers" since warranty information is common in various retail arenas.).

As per claim 15, Gullotta teaches enabling one or more requesting members of the organization to input information for a request for service from the department by connecting through a networked interface system (paragraph 35: "the platform system (10) may receive requests for services from user computers"); storing information regarding the requests for service received (paragraph 17: "database" which is used to store information); electronically forwarding information regarding the received request for service to a service provider participant (paragraph 35: "In the generalized examples of FIGS. 1 and 2, the platform system 10 may receive requests for services from user computers. The platform system 10 may also receive information from administrator computers relating to, for example, authorizations of users' requests or changes in users, policies or roles." See also Figure 1 where the partner systems (30) are contacted via the requests.); enabling a service provider participant to signoff a requested service based on performance of one or more tasks in the requested service (paragraph 107: "all requirements for defining approval signatures and enforcing them may be grouped into an Approval Management functional area. As another example, an Authentication and Authorization functional area may group all requirements for user authentication to the system and the management of a user's access to functions and data within the system."); and enabling a requestor to signoff a requested service (see also paragraph 107).

As per claim 16, Gullotta teaches the step of assigning a received service to one or more service provider participants (paragraph 124: "The roles and attributes associated with a user, as described above, may be assigned by human resources

personnel or other organizational employees prior to the user's start date. In preferred embodiments of the present invention, the provisioning of a user may be initiated by calling up a provisioning user interface (screen) on a Web browser connected to an organizational network.”).

As per claim 17, Gullotta teaches the step of enabling a service provider participant to change the status of a request for service through the networked system (paragraph 37: “to audit the current and historical status of the system”).

As per claim 22, Gullotta teaches the step of generating a message regarding a request for transmitting links to the stored request for service (paragraph 134: “t should be understood that although the above examples describe e-mail as a means for seeking information or approval from another person, or ordering resources, other methods of communication such as providing hyperlinks to Web pages and automated ordering of resources over the Internet using online resource provider order sheets may also be employed.”).

As per claim 23, Gullotta teaches the step of transmitting a message regarding the receipt of a new request for service received by the request for service input module to a service provider department member (paragraph 98: “The Workflow Server component (212) includes modules for provisioning and de-provisioning services within the system. The Workflow Server component includes the policy engine, workflow engine, logging, email, authentication and authorization modules of the applications services module group (132), as well as the data services modules (136) and the provisioning and message transforming modules of the remote services module group

(134).” And paragraph 35: “In the generalized examples of FIGS. 1 and 2, the platform system 10 may receive requests for services from user computers. The platform system 10 may also receive information from administrator computers relating to, for example, authorizations of users' requests or changes in users, policies or roles.”

Where messaging is utilized by the system and there is contact concerning requests from users to the system that are relayed to the partner systems (30), see Figure 1.).

As per claim 24, Gullotta teaches the step of transmitting a message regarding the receipt of a change to a request for service to the member that requested the service (paragraph 98: “The Workflow Server component (212) includes modules for provisioning and de-provisioning services within the system. The Workflow Server component includes the policy engine, workflow engine, logging, email, authentication and authorization modules of the applications services module group (132), as well as the data services modules (136) and the provisioning and message transforming modules of the remote services module group (134).” And paragraph 35: “In the generalized examples of FIGS. 1 and 2, the platform system 10 may receive requests for services from user computers. The platform system 10 may also receive information from administrator computers relating to, for example, authorizations of users' requests or changes in users, policies or roles.” Where messaging is utilized by the system and there is contact concerning receipt of requests via the customer administrators (18), see Figure 1.).

As per claim 25, Gullotta teaches the step of transmitting a message regarding availability of a service for user testing to the requestor of the service (paragraph 98:

Art Unit: 3623

"The Workflow Server component (212) includes modules for provisioning and de-provisioning services within the system. The Workflow Server component includes the policy engine, workflow engine, logging, email, authentication and authorization modules of the applications services module group (132), as well as the data services modules (136) and the provisioning and message transforming modules of the remote services module group (134)." And paragraph 35: "In the generalized examples of FIGS. 1 and 2, the platform system 10 may receive requests for services from user computers. The platform system 10 may also receive information from administrator computers relating to, for example, authorizations of users' requests or changes in users, policies or roles." Where messaging is utilized by the system and there is contact concerning receipt of requests via the customer administrators (18), see Figure 1. The system does not explicitly state user testing, but is implied by the statement "may receive requests for services from user computers" since user testing of product is common in various retail arenas).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 4 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gullotta in view of "Concentus Links Planning and Execution Systems by Bridging the "Last Mile" in Manufacturing-Java Workflow Engine Supports Peer-to-Peer,

Client/Server and Web Environments to Integrate Engineering Planning and MES Processes, and Manage Work in Process check-in/Check-out" Business Wire, Thursday May 24, 2001.

As per claim 4 and 18, Gullotta does not explicitly teach including costs benefit analysis information. Concentus teaches that it is known to have a request for service module that enables a user to input cost benefit analysis information related to the request for the service (paragraph 4: "the product offers cost effective EWR and WIP management functionality" which would make the inputting of cost benefit information inherent as one could not calculate something as being cost effective without doing so.). Concentus is an analogous art as it also teaches about workflow management. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the workflow management system of Gullotta with the cost benefit analysis feature of Concentus to provide an efficient means for realizing cost savings from using the workflow system.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The following art also teaches about workflow management systems: Ghoneimy et al (US 2004/0078373), Gullotta et al (US 2002/0156904), Reuveni (US 2003/0229524), Todd et al (US 2003/0115073), Sinn et al (US 2002/0174238), Casati et al (US 2002/0170035), Wilcox et al (US 2002/0161859), Gabbita et al (US 6,349,238), Gullotta et al (US 6,947,989), "Workflow and Internet:

Art Unit: 3623

Catalysts for Radical Change", Workflow Management Coalition, <http://www.wfmc.org>, June 1998, p 1-32; "Workflow Management Coalition The Workflow Reference Model", by David Hollingsworth, Document Number TC00-1003, Issue 1.1, January 19, 1995, p 1-55; and "New version offers state-of-the-art integration framework and multiple work group support", Business Wire, Wednesday October 25, 2000.


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Linda Krisciunas whose telephone number is 571-272-6931. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday, 6:30 am to 3:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tariq Hafiz can be reached on 571-272-6729. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

LMK

LMK
Dec 22, 2005


TARIQ R. HAFIZ
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600